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Aynho Wharf Caravans Station Road, Aynho, Oxfordshire, OX17 3BP Telephone 01869 337775 www.aynhowharfcaravans.com Email: sales@aynhowharfcaravans.com Lions near cash target to buy town's first public defibrillator

EART OF TH



Hannah Somerville

LIFESAVING equipment could soon be installed in the town as a group nears its fundraising target.

The Banbury Lions put on a concert last weekend and hopes the cash raised could be enough to buy Banbury's first public-access defibrillator.

The group has been working hard to raise the £2,000 needed for the equipment, which can be used by anyone to help those suffering a cardiac arrest.

The concert, which was staged at Marlborough Road Church, Banbury, featured a selection of songs from West End classics like Les Miserables, performed by local

band Impromptu. President Ian Wilson said:

"Impromptu agreed to put the concert on for us free of charge.
"All the proceeds will go to the

The Lions have put on numerous charity projects over the years, but the defibrillator appeal has been

running for about six months.
Mr Wilson said: "There are defibrillators at Castle Quay and Spiceball Leisure Centre, but they are only for use by trained people. Banbury is a big town and does not have one for public access. We worked closely with Chipping Norton Lions, who have already done this, and came to the conclusion that we should do something about it too.

The group spoke to Banbury Town Council, which has agreed for a defibrillator to be installed in

Defibrillators can save the lives of people going into cardiac arrest. The operator applies electrode pads to the victim's chest, which deliver a dose of electrical energy to the heart, helping it to return to its normal rhythm.
Mr Wilson said: "We hope to get a

state-of-the-art 'Intelligent Public Access Defibrillator'.

"It would sit inside a weatherproof, vandal-proof box on the wall that explains on the front how it's used, and has pictures in case people can't speak English." People can dial 999 and the

ambulance gives them a four-digit key code to use the defibrillator, which then starts 'talking' and tells people what to do.

The device can tell if the person has a heartbeat and won't work if it doesn't detect a need.



TOP and RIGHT: A public-access defibrillator that could be installed in Banbury town

ABOVE: Lions Club fundraisers, who hope to have raised enough to hit their target



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PLAYERS STEP UP FOR NEW SHOW

MORE than a third of the 80-strong Banbury Cross Players have pitched in to support a new production of *The 39 Steps.* The show runs at The Mill Arts Centre, Spiceball Road, from April 22 to 25. Tickets cost £12 at The Mill Box Office. Call 01295 279002 or go online at

MODEL FUNDRAISER FOR HOSPICE

A CHARITY fashion show is raising money for the Katharine House Hospice. On Thursday, April 30, at 7.30pm models will strut down the catwalk at the Mill Arts Centre Spiceball Park. Tickets are £11.50 on 01295 279002 or themillartscentre.co uk/cms/event/63751

POP-UP CAFE OPENS FOR PARENTS

PARENTS of children at Bloxham School, Banbury Road, are being invited to a new Monday "pop-up cafe" from 8.15am to 9.45am in the Adams Room on the second floor of the library. The first three meets will be held on Monday, April 27; Monday, May 18 and Monday, June 8.

Children root around while enjoying a range of outdoor forest activities



Pupils enjoy their visit to the 120-acre Warriner School Farm, Bloxham

school pupils around Cherwell have been out enjoying going back to their roots at Warriner School Farm.

The Warriner School, Bloxham, has opened up its 120acre organic farm for weekly sessions for the rest of the

Pupils from the Warriner Partnership group of ten local primaries including Bloxham. Christopher Rawlins and Deddington have been taking part in a range of outdoor activities, from den-building to mud kitchens to nature walks.

The project gives children an "alternative education" and encourages them to respond creatively to nature

Shenington C of E Primary School and Wroxton Primary School teamed up. Headteacher Sarah Reynolds said: "Our part. This was a great opportunity to benefit from the possibilities at Warriner School Farm.

Bev James, forest school leader at the farm, said: "Our first groups were a great success and it's been wonderful to see the children's progress in their practical and problem-solving

Funding from Sanctuary Housing has meant the school has been able to buy an extra tarpaulin, ropes and hand drills

to facilitate learning. Neighbourhood partnerships manager Kate Winstanley said: "We are delighted our support has enabled children to experience forest schooling. The children will be using their team-working and problemsolving skills within a natural environment.

Police arrest four men after raids

FOUR men from Oxford and Banbury were arrested for alleged fraud and trading standards offences after dawn raids involving 40 police officers.

Five residential addresses were searched at about 6am vesterday by police and trading standards officers.

As well as seizing items and documents, police arrested four men: three men from Oxford - aged 77, 66 and 37 - and a 33-year-old from Banbury.

Last night they were all in custody. Police spokeswoman Connie

Primmer said: "The warrants were executed as part of a joint enforcement operation.

"The co-operation and patience of residents while officers continue to carry out enquiries in relation to the alleged offences is much appreciated."

She refused to confirm if further raids were planned but said: "This is

an individual operation.
"The offences are fraud offences, both trading standards and criminal

"It has been a long and complex investigation."



The Banbury Cross Retail Park, in Lockheed Close, where new lease agreements with two big companies

Retail park to get two new stores

Iceland and Countrywide Farmers signing 10-year leases at shopping site

By Hannah Somerville omerville@nqo.com

TWO new stores have signed lease agreements and are on the way to Banbury Cross Retail Park, a letting agent has confirmed.

Businesses have welcomed the forthcoming Iceland and Countrywide Farmers outlets to the site in Lockheed Close.

The move was announced by Savills plc last Wednesday following the agreement of 10-year leases for each firm.

The Iceland store will operate from Unit Three, which totals 9,992 sq ft, using its new Food Warehouse format. It will offer more products in bulk quanti-

Alison Baldwin, from the

nearby Rugrats and Half Pints children's activity centre in Beaumont Road, said: "It will be good to have Iceland on the retail park. We at the company would be tempted to shop there."

Flora Sofioniou, who works at A & C Fish Bar in Cromwell Road and frequents the park for shopping, said: "I think it's a pretty good idea. Tesco could do with some competition. But it would be nice to see some more clothes shops. There's only a Next there.

She added that it was likely the site would see more traffic as a result, adding: "This road is pretty busy. It's always chock-a-

block at the roundabout."

The new store is set to open in July. Manager of the exist-ing Iceland branch in Calthorpe Street, Dan Lloyd, confirmed there were no current plans for its closure.

Unit Four, a 7,997 sq ft property, is set to be taken over by Countrywide Farmers plc. The company provides products and services for the rural and farming community.

Banbury Town Council leader Kieron Mallon, who has spoken with representatives from Countrywide, said: "From what I understand, this is their first ven-ture into a town. Their shops are usually in rural locations or on the edge of villages.

"They offer a whole range of goods that don't seem to be on offer anywhere else in Banbury. It's filling a niche, from wellies to small farm machinery. This will add to the retail experience and draw people in from other

Other leases agreed for spaces in the park include a 15-year one for Home Bargains and a one for Home Bargains and a re-geared lease for footwear re-tailer Brantano. They join other occupiers including DFS, Argos, Boots and Costa. Savills director Dominic Rodbourne said: "We are very pleased to have secured these-new retailers, who will comple-

ment the existing tenant mix.



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New-look ward 'brilliant'

Woodland makeover is hoped to help patients feel at ease

Hannah Somerville hsomerville@ngo.com

A SPRUCED-UP children's ward at the Horton General Hospital in Banbury has welcomed its first visitors.

The ward was recently redecorated with a woodland theme, to make young people at the ward feel more comfortable.

To celebrate, an Easter party was held on Friday for local and long-term patients and their families.

Those attending enjoyed arts and crafts and an Easter egg hunt organised by the Starlight Children's Foundation.

Jonah Hornez, nine, said of the makeover: "I like it, especially the animals

He added that he was also impressed with the playroom facilities.

Horton children's ward manager Zoe Butler said: 'We now have a much better environment focused on children and their com-

'The area is also much more family-friendly and



Zoe Butler with Caelan Clark, Tise Ayodeji, Ella Maylor, Tire Ayodeji, Elwood Grundon, Jonah Hornez, and Heath Butler

we have already had some great feedback.

"The difference it has made to the patients, their families and the staff so far is brilliant."

Tony McDonald, general manager of children's and vomen's division, said: We are delighted.

"We all know what an unsettling time being in a hospital can be, and with this, we can provide a more positive experience.



Nine-year-old Jonah Hornez in the woods



Ward manager Zoe Butler and Jonah Hornez

Chair returned

BANBURY: A woman who stole a wheelchair from a shop was forced to return it by police.

The 35-year-old was part of a group of people who borrowed an in-store wheelchair at Wilkinsons last month, Thames

Valley Police said. After paying for their shopping, police said the group left the shop and took the wheelchair.

The woman came forward after an appeal and the force issued her with an Adult Restorative Disposal on March 29, requiring her to return the wheelchair.

The force refused to name the woman, saying although it was legally allowed, it felt identifying her would not be "proportionate to the crime, and the shop was satisfied with her punishment.

The wrong train

BANBURY: A train from Banbury to London was delayed after its driver boarded the wrong train and drove it backwards.

Instead of getting on the First Great Western service to Paddington at Banbury station, the driver and train manager got on a train bound for Swansea and started to drive it back to London.

Once they realised their mistake they reversed back to Banbury, but the London train was delayed by half an hour as a

A First Great Western spokesman said: "We are really sorry. We are investigating what happened and how it happened."





Cloudy2Clear Windows – Service With A Smile!

It's been a crazy few months for Cloudy 2Clear Windows. The company which specialises in repairing windows which are steamed up, broken or damaged by replacing the panes – not the frames has grown rapidly as homeowners take advantage of their services. It's been a crazy

take advantage of their services.

Managing Director James Miller feels that it's all about service.

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that obviously helps.
Many tradespeople have
struggled since last year
and I honestly feel that
during the good times a
minority perhaps didn't
focus on customer care
as much as they should
have done. We make sure
we turn up when we say
we will, do the job the
customer requires and
leave their house as clean
as a whistle. I often get
comments back from
customers on how they
really didn't expect that
sort of service which,
in a way, is very sad for
the service industry as a
whole.
Cloudy2Clear service
the Oxford, Banbury
& Abingdon areas and
James is finding that his
approach is a major factor

in his success. The truth is that it's not just the personal satisfaction that I get from doing a good jub that labe it makes good business sense. I get a huge amount of business from friends and family of people I've done work for,

which just goes to show how much a little bit of effort is appreciated.' So, if your windows are steamed up, broken or damaged give James a call for a free quotation on 0800 61 21 118 and he'll be heavy to help! be happy to help!





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Man to fundraise for the home that saved his life

Activist calls for people to get involved in a 5,000-mile charity bicycle ride

Hannah Somerville hsomerville@nqo.com

A 20-YEAR-OLD man from Banbury is seeking a team of 100 cyclists to help him cover the distance from the UK to Guatemala.

Billy Foster was 16 when he arrived at Banbury Foyer, a 19-space sheltered housing unit off George Street, and now he wants to raise money for the charity that helped him change his life.

The home for young people aged 16 to 25 is run by Sanctuary Supported Living, which provides accommodation to more than 6,000 young people nationwide.

During his stay Billy was given support from the 'Young Adults with Purpose' programme organised by the Nicodemus Trust, which operates in Banbury and Guatemala.

Guatemala. He said: "When I first started being mentored I realised how much it would have helped me earlier in life.

"I've become more confident. I was on the wrong path to life, tak-

ing drugs and stuff, and I don't know where I would have ended up."

up."

He thrived under the programme and moved out at 18 after a two-year stint in the Foyer.

Now 20, Billy works at a cafe in Banbury train station and still meets mentor Paul Warman each week

Keen to make sure others would get the same second chance, he suggested the Nicodemus Trust organise a 'Cycle Challenge' to raise money, with riders collectively cycling the equivalent distance from the UK to Guatemala.

It will see participants ride a total of 5,313 miles, all on June 20. The circuit is a 50-mile figure of eight around Brackley town, Buckinghamshire, with Fringford village, near Bicester, at its southernmost point.

Riders can choose 25, 50, 75 or 100-mile options, with the possibility of a longer ride for the super

Billy said: "It's not going to be easy. I'm not very fit but Paul helped me source a bike for training." The YAP programme in Guatemala helps youngsters in areas where gang culture, drugs and prostitution are widespread.

For more information and to get involved visit nicodemustrust.org. uk/#!cycle-routes/c1n4c.



Race organiser Billy Foster, left, with mentor Paul Warman

Council teams up for awards

THE environmental services and communications teams from Cherwell District Council are in the running for a national award.

Both teams have been jointly shortlisted in the Team of the Year category at the MRW National Recycling Awards, which recognise innovation in recycling and resource management.

This follows a targeted campaign which used Facebook to clarify common recycling mistakes over three weeks in the run-up to Christmas.

Each council also held a recycling bin sale at the same time

sale at the same time. In Cherwell, officers also created the A-Z Guide to Recycling, promoting different recyclable items beginning with

each letter of the alphabet over 26 days. A previous Cherwell campaign, The Rubbish Guide to Christmas, had been taken up by South Northamptonshire, which shares the team.

Using an interactive advent calendar it featured a new item each day and invited residents to guess which bin it should be placed in.

Results of the awards are announced in London on Wednesday, July 1.

Ed Potter, head of both councils' environmental services, said: "This campaign involved the recycling and communications officers working closely together to use Facebook to highlight some items that are either put in the wrong bin, or not recycled at all. "The team monitored social media

"The team monitored social media seven days a week at all hours of the day and night to answer residents' questions and clarify any misconceptions. It is fantastic that the effort the team put into delivering this initiative has been recognised with a national shortlisting and we look forward to the results."



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Claim free baa of compost in giveaway event

THIRTY-THREE tonnes of compost will go out to residents in Cherwell District Council's eighth annual giveaway

The district council's green team are preparing 3,000 bags ready for the events in Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington.

The event will have garden and recycling experts, such as the Oxfordshire Master Composters, on hand to give out advice as well as a free bag of compost and food caddies.

Cherwell District Council's recycling officer Andrew Jenkins said: "Our annual compost giveaways are one of the most popular events in the Cherwell diary and each year thousands of people turn up to claim their free bag.

"The event is a great opportunity to personally thank residents for their on-going efforts to recycle by rewarding them with the very result of their hard

Last year saw 2,650 bags of free compost claimed and over 3,000 people attend the

annual event.
This year's events will run from 9am-1pm and start on Saturday, April 18, at Exeter Hall car park, Kidlington. Sunday, April 19, will see Grassroots Bicester and Bicester Green join the green team in Claremont car park in Bicester.

The final giveaway will round up in Windsor Street car park, Banbury on Sunday, April 26, and Banbury Community Action Group will host a seed swap.

Mr Jenkins added: "Aside from the free compost, there are also various other bargains and freebies to be had.

For more information on each event contact 01295 227003 or andrew.ienkins@ cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk.

Artists get ready to share their work as part of the annual Artweeks festival

ARTISTS are rolling up their sleeves and preparing to open their studio doors as part of the Oxfordshire Artweeks festival.

The annual event will see the works of artists displayed in more than 400 venues across the county from May 2-25.

Claire Reika Wright was shortlisted in 2014 for the global Lumen prize for digital fine art in recognition of her "mesmerising" moving paintings.

Her new series Celestial Trees blends traditional and digital painting techniques and was inspired by walks in the Cotswolds

Miss Wright, from Banbury,

who turns 70 this year, said: "Mesmerising is the word that tends to be put in the visitors' book.

"For someone of my age working with the technology that I use is quite unusual.

"It's difficult because most

others using this technology are in their twenties and thirties.

"But I've grown up with computers - my first job was in computer programming.

The project will be hosted by fine art printers Senecio Press at Tramway Industrial Estate, Haslemere Way, Banbury, from May 2-10.

For more information visit artweeks.org



Claire Reika Wright prepares to open her studio doors during Artweeks

Helping hand at the gy

Buddy scheme for people with mental health issues

Hannah Somerville hsomerville@ngo.com

TRAINED volunteers will be on hand in Banbury as "gym buddies" to help get people with mental health issues into sport.

The scheme is being piloted at the town's Spiceball Leisure Centre over an eight-week

It is the result of a partnership between

mental health charity Mind, Oxfordshire Sports Partnership, Cherwell District Council and Parkwood Leisure, the company that operates the Spiceball centre.

It is hoped that having a "gym buddy" will help people who are nervous about attending leisure centres, making them feel more confident and comfortable using the facility.

Cherwell District Council director of community and environment Ian Davies said: "The thought of walking into a gym or leisure centre for the first time can be nerve-

wracking for most people, but for those with mental health issues it can be even more daunting.

"It is well known that exercise can improve physical and mental wellbeing.

'So, we don't want people who could really benefit from leisure centre usage to miss

A volunteer will be assigned to the attendee for their first few sessions at the leisure centre.

Those who attend at least six sessions over eight weeks will be given a free Link card, which offers half-price

admission to the centre for the next 12 months.

If successful, the scheme may be rolled out to other leisure centres in Bicester and Kidlington.

People interested in signing up to the scheme signing up to the scheme should come to a free open event at Spiceball Leisure Centre, Cherwell Drive, nextWednesday, from 10.30am

to 11.30am. There will be more information and a chance to meet the volunteers

For more information contact 01295 221720 or email tom. gubbins@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

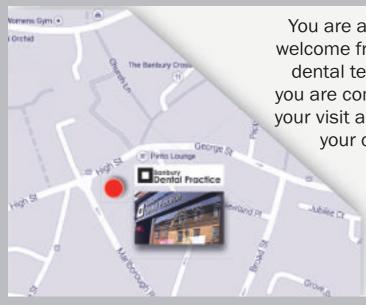


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LANDFILL SITE CLOSURE

AFTER 35 years Ardley landfill site has shut and will no longer take non-hazardous waste. The waste will be recycled at Viridor's £205m Energy Recovery Facility. The facility next the former landfill site can recycl 300,000 tonnes of waste per year household waste recycling cer not be affected by the closur

THIEF TRIO HIT STORE

POLICE have appeal for after three men stole store in Orchard W Officers said thre rolls, and place The group left witho 30pm on Thursda

Creative young people combat stereotypes one handcrafted cushion at a time



Young people present their cushions to residents of The Ridings care hon

FIVE Grimsbury teens surlents of The with cushion themselves Ridings s they

had crafted themselves.
The youngsters, aged between 12 and 14, had been workin with OYAP Trust, a children art charity encouraging people to get creative and express themselves.

The cushions took about three weeks to make and were presented to elderly residents of the home, in Daventry Road, last Tuesday.

They had enlisted the help of freelance fabric printing artist

Imogen Morris, and worked with sewing machines and with sewing machines and fabric pens to complete their resigns. Project coordinator anie Johnson said: "One of the young people, Jordan, suggested it and saw her idea come to tife.

absolutely loved it and really enjoyed having the visitor

s is to chang the older

busine looki

BUILDERS • ELEC GARDENERS • PLUMBI



Youngsters, aged from seven to 10, in the 2nd Banbury B day trip to London

Guides step in to relaunch parade

Group is keen to uphold the traditional event with town centre march

Hannah Somerville

THE traditional St George's en revived, ides across thank who will take r the first time this

eviously the Banbury paade, held close to St George Day on April 23, was run by the North Oxfordshire Scouts, who enlisted the help of the Guides.

But last year, the Scouts es-chewed the parade in favour of an activity day at Heyford Park, which will again be held this year instead.

But the Guides have stepped in and have said they wish to keep the original event. Catherine

trains were delayed in

Oxfordshire last week. The problems at Slough caused holdBlackburn, assistant Guider and district administrator from Deddington, has stepped up to the plate to co-ordinate the event on

Sunday, April 26. She said: "We were a bit sad last year when we did not have a parade. The majority of girls relly enjoyed it

showi nationa

vement." will follow a <mark>si</mark>milar The event format to pro a parade fro

centre to a service in St Mary's Church, Horse Fair Participants from all disciplinations — including the Rainbows, Brownies, Guides and Senior Section — will wear uniforms and carry their units' flags.

At the church service presentations will be given on topics such as the history of guiding and promises made by Guides.

There will also be a recital of the national anthem and Banbury town mayor Sean Woodcock will give the customary salute. Cherwell Division com-missioner Gwyneth Davies said:

"The St George's Day parade is a tradition we would like to continue. It's something we've enjoyed all the way and it's great

we are able to keep it going."

About 650 girls are members ainbows, Brownies, Girles and the Senior Section in oss Cherwell, led by about adult volunteers

r 100 girls are on the ng list.

Banbury the Guides have had a presence for more than 100 years. Some of the earliest groups no longer exist but among the oldest still meeting are 1st Grimsbury Brownies, started in 1931, and 1st Grimsbury Guides, 1932. Girlguiding has an ongoing

national campaign to seek more adult members and volunteers.

For more information call 0800 695901 or you can visit the website at girlguiding.org.uk.

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YOUTHS CRAFT TABLES

SCOUTS from the Middle Barton group have put their woodwork skills to the test tables for 10 Cott Association resi

owards their voungsters

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Q

Vintage van journey is a piece of cake



Linda Needle, who is taking part in the WI celebrations

AS the Women's Institute centenary baton embarked on its journey around Oxfordshire earlier this week, it wasn't just the car that needed fuelling.

Fortunately Linda Needle, in a 1934 van, had this covered – stopping at five WIs during a 30-mile trip to pick up homemade cakes. She has been involved with the county federation for 20 years.

The baton is due to pass through 140 WIs across Oxfordshire, marking the centenary of the WI this year.

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Boost for the hunt to find foster carers

Grant means council can spend £180,000 to help support respite for parents of disabled children

Luke Sproule Isproule@nqo.com

FOR parents of a disabled child, a few days of personal time every month can be a welcome break from the stresses and strains of daily life.

Now Oxfordshire County Council has asked people to help give those parents some well-deserved time off by becoming short-term foster carers.

And the authority is set to invest £180,000 into recruiting more staff to support respite foster carers after winning a government grant.

In a new scheme, it is holding a series of open days that will allow people to find out more about what it means to be a respite carer and how they can sign up.

up.
Current respite foster carers Teresa
and Paddy O'Grady have been caring
for six-year-old Harry since 2013.

for six-year-old Harry since 2013.

County council finance worker Mrs
O'Grady said: "Getting to know Harry
and his family makes you realise how
hard it must be for some parents and
their children.

"It's just to give them that small break they need for themselves and other children, but also to give Harry something different from his normal day-today life.

"It feels so rewarding and we are so pleased we went ahead with our decision to become short break foster carers."

There are currently 315 households registered as foster carers in Oxfordshire but the county council wants to sign up as many as it can.

The £180,000 grant, which is part of a £1.6m Government fund, will help create foster care hubs, where county council staff will offer support to foster parents

This is designed to allow them to share any problems they may have with staff and improve children's time in care.

The O'Gradys had some experience with disabled children but had never



Paddy and Teresa O'Grady, who are respite foster carers, look after children when their parents need a break

cared for a disabled child in their own home before.

The couple applied to become foster carers in 2012 after Mrs O'Grady read a leaflet at work about short-break foster carers.

The 53-year-old said: "I would urge anyone who thinks they might be able to provide this support for other families to find out more at the open days." Harry's mother, who we are not nam-

Harry's mother, who we are not naming to protect the family's confidentiality, said: "The short breaks provided by Teresa and Paddy have been life-changing for us.

"They enable me to spend a bit more time with the rest of the family every so often and give Harry the opportunity to gain new experiences.

"He absolutely loves his visits to Teresa and Paddy."

The first open day was held last month at County Hall in Oxford and more events will be run from June on-

The county council's Melinda Tilley said there would be a stall at Oxford Pride on June 6 to promote fostering to the LGBT community. The council also wants to appeal to church groups.

Council leader rallies for merging of services

A 'VIRTUAL' union of the county's local authorities could be created to save money, a council leader has claimed.

Oxfordshire County Council leader lan Hudspeth said it was the fourth option in the debate about whether all six councils in the county should merge.

He added that it could see all the councils share staff and administration costs, but retain their own front offices.

At the moment there are four district councils, Oxford City Council and the county council.

In January all the other council leaders told Mr Hudspeth they were strongly against a single authority. But Mr Hudspeth said: "You have to look

But Mr Hudspeth said: "You have to look at all the options and there is a virtual option four, where each council maintains a front office and then backroom operations are done together.

"We do not know what is going to happen post May 7 and it might well be that the new government will be looking at different ways to try and save money."

His comments came after the county council published a report earlier this year, by international auditors Ernst and Young, which claimed merging



Oxfordshire County Council leader, Ian Hudspeth, who wants to start a debate on merging council services

Oxfordshire's councils could save £33 million a year.

Currently there is a two-tier system of local government, with the county council offering different services to the city council and four district councils.

But the four leaders of West Oxfordshire, Cherwell, South Oxfordshire and Vale of the White Horse district councils have ruled out a single authority for all services.

They instead favour sharing the costs of services, or other options from the report, such as having three unitary councils – in the city, in the north and in the south.

A third option was a "doughnut" unitary council made up of the districts, with a city unitary council in the middle.

But Mr Hudspeth said a reorganisation of local government was essential to tackle future funding pressures: "I have had conversations with the other leaders and they have said [a single authority] is not going to happen.

"But the current government has always said any reorganisation would have to

come from the bottom up.
"The other councils think it is about the
county council trying to take over, but this
is actually about the fact we are facing
rising costs in social services and
children's services.

"We need to ask where that money will come from and we need to have a grownup conversation."

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Nurse in running for award for her support

A COMMUNITY psychiatric nurse has been nominated for the national patient's choice award.

Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust nurse Kelly Hawes was nominated by one of her patients, Susan Hemming

Hemming.
Ms Hawes is one of four
nurses out of 100
nominations to be
shortlisted, and she will
attend a ceremony where the
winner is announced on May

Ms Hemming said: "I had given up on my life, I was reverting to my anorexia, self-harming daily, feeling suicidal and without any hope.

"Kelly believed in me.
Every time I was ready to
give up on life she convinced
me life hadn't given up on me
yet and neither had she"

yet and neither had she."

Ms Hawes said: "It is such an honour to be nominated, and even more so to be shortlisted

shortlisted.
"I always try to hone in on the positive with my clients and support them back to independence. Susan and I quickly built a good therapeutic relationship.

"Even though she is very capable, caring and talented, she found it difficult to look to the future, so I encouraged her to follow her dream and I kept the positivity going when she found that hard.

"Her hard work, ability and dedication have led to her achieving her goal and am so very pleased for her."

The public have until April 29 to vote for Ms Hawes at nurseawards.co.uk/740.

Hi-tech revision app helps both pupils and teachers



Charley Darbishire shows students his new online app Educake

Gill Oliver goliver@nqo.com

PUPILS from Bloxham School and Banbury Academy – together with more than 30 schools across the rest of the UK – have welcomed technology which helps them revise and do their homework on the move.

New science app Educake allows them to log in using a tablet or smart phone to answer set questions and then gives instant feedback on how they are doing.

One Oxfordshire GCSE pupil Kate Humphries said: "It's a different way of learning and testing yourself and encourages working independently." And fellow student Bethan Bache, 15, added: "It's a nicer way to revise be-

cause it's more visual."

Charley Darbishire came up with the idea after years of writing traditional

paper-based exam revision guides.
He said: "Most educational software is a bit dated and won't work on tablets

is a bit dated and won't work on tablets or mobile phones. "Knowing that digital products and resources for teachers weren't very good, I realised there was a gap in the

good, I realised there was a gap in the market."

The 37-year-old had little tech knowhow when he started work on the pro-

ject three years ago. He added: "I know nothing about coding, so got a web designer to build a pro-

totype then taught myself to expand it.
"It was really difficult while I was developing it as we didn't have any money.
"My wife was still a trainee teacher, so we were living off baked beans."
There are four versions of Educake to

There are four versions of Educake to tie in with different exam boards and teachers can download pupils' results to see where they need more help.

to see where they need more help.

Mr Darbishire said: "The average teacher spends 10 hours a week marking or planning homework."

"But teachers have brilliant knowledge and expertise, so why ask them to waste all that time ticking and crossing their way through a massive pile of books?"

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Open gardens festival to raise hospice funds

THE line-up has been announced for this year's Festival of Open Gardens in aid of Katharine House Hospice.

From the expansive grounds of Broughton Castle to family homes, local organisations and gardeners will throw open their garden gates from May to July to raise money for the Adderbury hospice.

Events begin at a home in

Events begin at a home in Wintergardens Way, Banbury, where visitors can observe the small three-tiered garden and pond with permission of owner Nick McCarthy. Last year, the Festival of Open Gardens raised 512,000. Organisers are hoping for a similar sum this year as part of Katharine House's annual fundraising target of £2.3 million.

Communications officer Sophie Bird said: "It's a really nice day out. You can wander around and pick people's brains.

"Open gardens are a longestablished tradition and very popular. There's an element of fun in snooping around other people's gardens, but it's also about an exchange of ideas and getting inspiration. It almost turns into a village event, with people getting to know their neighbours and fellow gardeners. It's just as nice seeing what someone has done with their small patio garden as with acres and acres of land at Broughton Grange."

Katharine House Hospice is inviting people to visit its own gardens on Sunday, June 7, which provide a haven for patients. Visit khh. org.uk/festival-of-open-gardens-may-july/

Conman set for sentencing after fraud conviction

A CONMAN who told victims Peter Morris and John Zarno he would pass on donations to the family of an injured pilot had his sentencing adjourned.

of an injured pilot had his sentencing adjourned. Kevin Crellin, 52, of Sibford Gower, was convicted after a trial of three counts of fraud on February 24 this year. He also conned Susan Waring-Smith, saying he would provide or arrange flying

training.
The delay was so Crellin could obtain a report on a heart condition he claims to be suffering from. He is now due to be sentenced later this week.

Plan on to next stage

HOOK NORTON: The Neighbourhood Plan for Hook Norton has received district council approval to go on to the referendum stage. Introduced in 2012, local communities

have been invited to prepare Neighbourhood Plans setting out aims, policies, and proposals for future development. They can be broad-ranging or focus on a narrow group of issues like

housing, transport or the environment. Other villages producing a Neighbourhood Plan include Bloxham and Adderbury.

A referendum asking residents if they want Cherwell District Council to use the plan is now being timetabled and at least 28 days' notice will be given.

If more than 50 per cent of people approve, it will become part of the statutory development plan for Hook

Missed waiting target

OXON: The Oxford University Hospitals Trust missed a key A&E waiting time for the first quarter of this year.

There were 32,999 patients who attended Oxford's John Radcliffe and Banbury's Horton General hospitals from January to March.

Of those, 85.4 per cent were discharged, admitted or transferred within four

The target is 95 per cent and the average for the country was 91.8 per cent.

Nominations sought

BANBURY: Nominations for this year's community and volunteer awards are being sought by Banbury Town Council.

The awards recognise achievements by organisations and people who have made a different to the Banbury community and made it a better place to work and

There are three categories of the awards: Charity of the Year, open to charities and community organisations, Volunteer of the Year, and Young Volunteer of the Year for under-25s.

Awards will be presented during the mayor's inauguration ceremony on Tuesday, May 12, at 6.30pm in the Town

To nominate an individual or group, bring or send a written explanation of 50 to 100 words to Tricia Campbell, Banbury Town Council, Town Hall, Bridge Street, Banbury OX16 5QB.

Latest MG version

BANBURY: An updated version of the MG6 car was launched last week at Junction Eleven photographic studios, Wildmere Park

The 2015 MG6 has an improved engine and produces 10g less CO2 per km than the previous model. The interior features a newly designed dashboard and electronic handbrake.

MG has a proud history in Oxfordshire, with the former Abingdon home of founder Cecil Kimber honoured with a blue plaque last year. He developed his sports car while working for Oxford car magnate William Morris, and founded the MG marque in 1924.

Mutilation horror

OXON: Hospitals in Oxfordshire have identified 16 new cases of women who have been victims of female genital mutilation (FGM). Oxford University Hospitals NHS

Trust, which operates the John Radcliffe Hospital, the Churchill Hospital and the Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre in Oxford and the Horton General Hospital in Banbury, identified the new cases between September 2014 and February 2015.

The trust was in contact with 94 patients in the same time frame, some of them already known to the hospital.

Most victims suffered FGM - the removal of parts of the female sexual organs for cultural reasons - some years ago in countries such as Sudan, Somalia and Egypt.

British Legion calling for help in marking VE Day

Residents asked to join in with celebrations of 70th anniversary of end of war

Callum Keown ckeown@ngo.com

The Royal British Legion is encouraging Oxfordshire residents to join national celebrations of the 70th anniversary of VE Day less than a month away.

Victory in Europe Day marks the date that the Nazis surrendered to the Allies in the Second World

On May 8 1945 Oxfordshire was awash with street parties to celebrate the occasion.

Michael Siggery, 80, recalled: "We were all assembled on the estate. Everyone had street parties and there were bonfires after-

"It was very joyous and happy. There was a chap stood outside the Ampleforth Arms pub with his

drum playing away." He added: "I think it's something to celebrate – to remember those who gave their lives and fought for us. I would like to raise my right arm with a pint in it.

County RBL chairman Jim Lewendon encouraged people to take it upon themselves to host events.

He said: "We are hoping to organise a special afternoon on the day but we have only got the Littlemore and Marston branches left.

So far there is nothing planned and I'm trying to encourage some

"The days of big parades are over. There are hardly any of us left, but the day should definitely

be celebrated.
"I'm hoping young people will get involved and lots of smaller events and parties will be put on

across the county."
The Royal British Legion has suggested a number of ways com-

munities can get involved. Organising a 1940s tea with bunting and vintage dress. dinner parties made with ration recipes and wartime community singalongs are just some of the way people are being encouraged to mark the occasion.

RBL area manager for the South East Midlands, Mark Collins, said: "We are honoured to salute the Second World War generation.

"We hope that all communities will use the VE Day 70 commemorations to thank them and celebrate the role they played in our



Flashback to the first VE Day party being staged in Oxfordshire

PhD graduates to get on-site teacher training

A SCHEME to recruit PhD graduates into state schools is being introduced in Oxfordshire. The Researchers in

Schools programme will see postgraduates start their two-year on-site training in September. The scheme has been supported by Melinda

Tilley, the county council's education chief.

A pilot scheme in London saw 10 state comprehensive schools take on 20 new trainee teachers, and now applications for Oxfordshire places are

Mrs Tilley said: "I think it's a really good idea. Public schools have been doing it for years.

"They take the pick of the crop and train them up so they are the best in their subject, and then trained how to pass that knowledge on to others.'

Graduate recruits would spend three days a week teaching, one day a week in training and one day focused on academic pursuits. They will come out of the

two-year programme with qualified teacher status and will be encouraged to stay



Melinda Tilley

at the schools Recruits in the subjects of maths and physics, where there is a shortage of teachers, will receive a salary of £40,000.

Researchers in Schools – which is sponsored by businesses including Shell, Goldman Sachs and Northern Gas Networks – said the programme aimed to raise educational achievements by using the expertise of PhD graduates and to inspire young people to go on to university

Applications for next school year, starting in September, are open until Monday, May 4. Visit researchersinschools.org for more details.



Huge jobs cuts looming at Thames Valley police

More than 650 police and staff roles could go over three years to save millions

MORE than 650 police officers and staff posts across Thames Valley Police could be axed to save millions over the next three years.

The force needs to save almost £22m by 2017/18, with a budget deficit of £11.7m in 2016/17 and £10.2m in 2017/18.

Chief Constable Francis Hab good promised to do everything he can to use the resources allocated to protect frontline policing. But he said: "There has also got

to be an honesty with the public about what services we can and can't deliver in the future.

"I don't know what the threat is

Police officers cannot be made redundant but Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) can and officer posts can be cut.

There are already plans to axe 36 police officers and 37 staff posts in 2016/17 and a further 61 staff posts in 2017/18 after the force announced the loss of 187 officer posts and 16 staff posts in Novem-

In one of her final reports to the Thames Valley Police and Crime



Chief Constable Francis Habgood chats to reporter Alex Wynick

Alex Wynick

awvnick@ngo.com

Commissioner Anthony Stansfeld, outgoing Chief Constable Sara Thornton proposed to cut another 143 officer posts in the first year and another 179 in the second, a total of 358 officer posts being cut. Police staff and PCSO also face

reductions, with 303 posts potentially being cut over the two years.

But Acting Deputy Chief Constable John Campbell said: "The numbers quoted simply show what could be saved by losing posts. At this stage it does not relate to actual posts.
"The shortfalls are projections

based on the limited information available and the potential reductions in police and staff numbers are only indications.

He said that even if posts are

cut, few people would be made redundant: "Each year we naturally lose police officers and staff due to retirement, relocation or resignations so it is expected that a high percentage of these savings will be

achieved through those.
"Where these savings cannot be made through natural losses, we will hold vacancies and redeploy staff in line with policies to minimise staff redundancies.

Newmarket Holidays

Breakfast clubs could help close the pupil attainment gap

BREAKFAST clubs could help close the attainment gap between children from richer and poorer backgrounds, councillors will be told today

In a report before Oxfordshire County Council's education scrutiny committee, director of children's services Jim Leivers said they would particularly benefit children from families who struggled to provide "a nutritious start to

He has recommended that councillors urge headteachers and school governors to consider introducing the clubs if they do not already run them.

It comes after councillor Gill Sanders requested that officers investigate whether breakfast clubs could help

improve pupil performance.

In response, Mr Leivers wrote:
"Common sense tells us that if children and young people are properly 'fed and watered' that will make a positive contribution to their health and wellbeing and that this may well, in turn, serve to improve such things as attendance, attention and behaviour and, ultimately, contribute to improved

learning."
He said that of 61 schools and academies looked at by officers, at least 23 ran breakfast clubs.

And Mr Leivers said that research carried out by the National Foundation for Educational Research suggested the clubs had many benefits for those who attended them

The research said children who attended them were able to concentrate more during the day and could reinforce healthy messages, such as proper food hygiene and warnings about habits such as smoking and drinking.



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The ugly duckling tale gets a sassy and stylish revamp

THE DUFF (12A, 101 mins)

IT SEEMS rather disingenuous for Hollywood - an industry that reveres glamour, designer couture and agedefying beauty – to peddle wish fulfil-ment fantasies to female audiences that extol beauty as a quality that radi-

ates purely from within.

Cinema's so-called ugly ducklings are invariably gorgeous actresses, who have neglected to wash their hair and put on make-up for a few scenes, dressed in oversized fashions.

Their transformation into glittering swans is just a couple of hours away, courtesy of a top stylist.

Ultimately, we're suckers for these widescreen fairy tales and *The Duff* continues the trend with sassiness and

Ari Sandel's film is an unabashedly feel-good comedy about one young woman's journey from insecurity to self-acceptance that patrols the same high school corridors as She's All That, Clueless, Mean Girls and 10 Things 1

Hate About You.

Josh A Cagan's script, adapted from the novel by Kody Keplinger, embraces every well-worn cliche and convention, empowering its heroines to take control of their lives and defy magazine articles that dictate how they should behave or dress.

Thus one tomboy isn't fussed about attending her school's rites-of-passage prom because she already has a date in front of the TV.

There's a Vincent Price marathon on so I gotta watch that," she deadpans. The devoted horror fan is Bianca

(Mae Whitman), who attends par-ties with her best friends Jess (Skyler Samuels) and Casey (Bianca A Santos), oblivious to the fact that she is the D.U.F.F. – Designated Ugly Fat Friend – of her close-knit social circle.

When her next-door neighbour, hunky athlete Wesley (Robbie Amell), is dating the school's queen bee Madison (Bella Thorne), opens Bianca's eyes to the upsetting truth, she re solves to transform from an ugly duck-



Mae Whitman, who plays Bianca Piper



Stand by for a clash of personalities in this scene from the film ${\it The Duff}$

ling in order to land a date with her

dream beau, Toby (Nick Eversman).

Bianca recruits Wesley to polish her rough edges and in return, she improves his academic grades so he can secure a sports scholarship.

With encouragement from her sassy mother (Allison Janney), whose mantra is "believe, retrieve, achieve ... just don't conceive," Bianca realises that even the most beautiful girls at school are someone's D.U.F.F. and she shouldn't be defined by a cruel label.

Meanwhile, Madison grows jealous of Bianca's friendship with Wesley and dispatches her acolyte Caitlyn (Rebecca Weil) to spy on the odd couple.

The Duff is a heartfelt and frequently hilarious traipse through teenage angst, anchored by a luminous central performance from Whitman.

She endears us to her snarky and cynical 17-year-old and shares winning screen chemistry with dreamboat Amell, and Janney as the divorced mom, who believes you should "project confidence with a power pant-suit

Colourful supporting turns from Ken Jeong and Romany Malco up the laughter quotient to the brink of hysteria.

CakeWhat's on

Amey Theatre, Abingdon, Abing-don School, Bath Street, Abingdon: The Sound of Music. Runs until April 18. 7.30pm. The classic Rogers & Hammerstein's musical juggernaut. AOS plans to produce fantastic evening's entertainment for the whole family. £10.

Burton Taylor Studio, 11 Beaumont Street, Oxford: A World Beyond Man. 7.30pm. Based on a true story, this is the tale of Valerian Albanov and his desperate journey to escape a doomed polar voyage. An intimate telling of an epic story of ice and polar bears, adventure and death. 01865 305350.

and death. U1805 3U333U.

Corn Exchange, Wallingford, Market Place, Wallingford: Life of Riley
by Alan Ayckbourn. Runs until April
18. 7:45pm. Sinodun Players' spring production is a dark comedy set in three gardens, a farmyard and, finally, a cemetery. Ayckbourn said

he had always wanted to write a comedy that finished with a funeral but got laughs along the way. So, there's plenty to laugh about and, typically, there is a final twist in the tale. Info and tickets www.cornexchange.org.uk. £10. 01491 825000 Oxford Playhouse, Beaumont Street, Oxford: Arcadia. Runs until

April 18. 7:30pm. Tom Stoppard's play is a modern masterpiece, exploring the delicate relationship between past and present. English Touring Theatre returns to Oxford with a new production of this Olivier Award-winning comedy, recently voted one of the nation's top five shows in their 'My Favourite Play' poll. 01865 305305.

FRIDAY

Cornerstone Arts Centre, 25 Station Road, Didcot: 300-1 Monkey Poet. 8pm. A schoolboy re-enacts the macho homoerotic war film 300 in his bedroom, with Wilfred Owen as his Homeric scribe. Compared to the likes of Bill Hicks, Lenny Bruce,

George Carlin and Matt Panesh, Monkey Poet treats us to a double bill of his new one man show and brilliant poetic stand up. Please note that seating will be limited. £11. 01235 515144.

The Story Museum, 42 Pembroke Street, Oxford: Tongues of Flame. 7pm. An exploration of the fascinating life of British explorer Richard F. Burton (1821 – 1890). Not suitable for under-14s due to some adult themes.£10 (concessions £8). 01865 305305

SATURDAY

Cornerstone Arts Centre, 25 Station Road, Didcot: A Strange Wild Song. 7.30pm. France in the Second World War. Three children encounter a lost American soldier in the ruins of their village. Decades later, the soldier's camera is unearthed and his grandson tries to solve the mystery of the photographs inside. £15, £13.50 (concs), £10 (under 16s). 01235 515144.

CakeSport banburycake.co.uk/sport

SPOT-ON: Banbury United keeper Leigh Bedwell saved a penalty

Great escape is on after victory

Hope is increased of surviving the drop

BANBURY United kept their faint hopes of avoiding the drop alive with a shock 3-0 victory over Evo-Stik Southern League Premier Division play-off chasers at Spencer Stadium on Saturday.

Biggleswade's win at Bideford was a blow to Banbury, who closed the gap with a game in hand on Frome to eight points with four to go.
The Puritans broke the

deadlock just before half

Kynan Isaac beat two defenders, before his reverse pass found Jacob Daffern, **Banbury Utd** Wevmouth

whose cross was knocked home by Carl Tappin.
Darius Browne then

missed a good chance to double the lead after being picked out by Isaac.

It looked as though this might be costly on the hour mark when Adam Kelly was brought down by Browne just inside the penalty area.

But Kelly's spot-kick was well saved by Leigh Bed-

Banbury made it 2-0 in the 77th minute when a

low corner was converted by their top-scorer Leam Howards from close range at the second attempt fol-lowing more good work from Isaac.
The home side sealed the

result when Jacob Walcott converted a penalty, awarded for a foul by Weymouth substitute Jordan Copp, to keep Banbury's hopes of avoiding relegation alive. Banbury Utd: Bedwell, Daffern, Brov (Cray 63), Meade, Westbrook, Ryan, 90), Murombedzi. Subs not used: Martin, Fishwick, Smith.

 ON Saturday, Banbury are at home to Histon.

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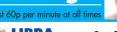
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as this is the beginning of something really big. Ring now for more productive and opportune week.





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The successful candidate will require excellent communication skills, have an organised approach and be logical in your thinking. You will be confident in using your own initiative and contribute to team targets. Good knowledge of Microsoft Office is essential, including Word, Excel and Powerpoint

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In brief

■BRITISH designer Sir Paul Smith has created a one-off Land Rover Defender with a multi-coloured exterior and a bespoke interior finish. There are 27 paint colours on the body, most of which were mixed specially from Pantone colour references provided by the designer. He said: "There are lots of little hidden details. For example, there is a hand-painted bee on the roof, a little tongue-in-cheek reference to the countryside and the heritage of the car." Gerry McGovern, the design director at Land Rover, said: "I felt it would be a fitting tribute to the iconic Defender, that one of Britain's most distinguished designers worked with the Land Rover team to recognise his creative vision."

■THE new MG6 was revealed to the UK press in Banbury with what the firm is describing as "improved" efficiency, equipment and infotainment.

Matthew Cheyne, MG's head of marketing, said: "The new MG6 is a big leap forward from the original car, which has been the result of thousands of hours of dedicated work from designers and engineers."

Full report from the launch next week.

Nissan crossover blazes a new trail

Auto Facts

Model: Nissan X-Trail Visia dCi 130 Price: £22,995 Insurance group: 19E Fuel consumption (Combined): 57.6mpg

Top speed: 117mph Length: 464cm/182.6in Width: 182cm/71.6in Luggage capacity: 19.4 cu ft

Fuel tank capacity: 12.1 gallons/55 litres

CO2 emissions: 129g/km

Warranty: Three years/60,000 miles

David Duffy david.duffy@nqo.com

THE prospect of a 200-mile round trip in grim late-winter weather might deter many drivers – but not if you are at the wheel of Nissan's new X-Trail.

Quiet, comfortable and highly capable off-road, the new X-Trail joins the Qashqai, Juke and Murano in Nissan's comprehensive range of crossovers

range of crossovers.

Power in the seven-seat car comes from a new 130 horsepower turbo-diesel engine that offers not only significantly improved CO2 emissions, but lower fuel consumption compared to the previous model.

The four-cylinder 1.6-litre unit produces the same torque as the previous 2.0-litre dCi unit and, says Nissan, is considerably more efficient and cleaner.

Available in both two- and four-wheel-drive versions, all versions come with an improvement in rear legroom and the availability of features from an opening panoramic roof and a powered tailgate, to LED head-lamps.

Its striking look is a world away from the chunky lines of its predecessor, and the interior is completely different, with a

The Nissan X-Trail Visia dCi 130

raked theatre seating layout.

The second row seats have a sliding and reclining function and the optional third row seats have a double fold function that allows them to be folded completely flat.

Other touches include a large between-the-seats storage box large enough to take an iPad or 10-inch tablet.

There is plenty of versatility too in the load space, with an innovative double load floor providing flexible storage ontions

viding flexible storage options. On the move the X-Trail's cabin is noticeably quieter than its predecessor, both around town and particularly when cruising at motorway speeds.

A properly mixed-up combi-

A properly mixed-up combination of city driving, crosscountry and motorway cruising produced combined fuel consumption just topping 50mpg, not a world away from the claimed Government figure.

Available in three grades: Visia, Acenta and Tekna, all models feature air-conditioning, alloy wheels and six airbags, LED daytime running lights, five-inch colour display, Bluetooth with microphone, cruise control and speed limiter, hill start assist and follow-me-home lights.

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SPECIAL

Got skills behind the wheel?

Race is on to find best young driver

THE search is on for the country's best young driver – but the catch is they have to be aged under 17.

The Young Driver Challenge 2015 offers 11- to 16-year-olds the chance to show their skills behind the wheel of a car. Budding young drivers can enter at Unipart in

Run by Young Driver, the UK's largest provider of pre-17 driving lessons, the challenge aims to encourage youngsters to consider responsible and safe driving, with top marks given to those who show the best levels of control and awareness.

It is backed by the Institute of Advanced Motorists and motoring

presenter Quentin Willson. Entries can be made until the end

Entries can be made until the end of July and the 40 top scorers will be invited to a final event to be held in the Midlands in September.

Drivers are assessed during a lesson at any of Young Driver's 28 venues, and marked according to strict criteria on their driving skills and manoeuvres, including parallel parking, figures of eight, judgement and positioning.

judgement and positioning.
Participants complete the second
part of the test after their lesson
via the Goodyear Driving
Academy, an online driving
simulator which tests a
youngsters' knowledge of the
Highway Code.

The challenge took place for the first time in 2014, with hundreds of entries from around the country. The top prizes on offer include 20 Young Driver lessons, 20 'on the road' post-17 driving lessons courtesy of Goodyear, a Young Driver at School session for the winner and their classmates and £500 off a car insurance premium courtesy of Young Driver sponsor Admiral.

There will also be a special Admiral Award for the young driver who shows the best attitude, with a £200 cash prize.

For more information about the challenge, log on to www.young driver.eu or call 0844 371 9010.

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